

IN THE FIELDS



M.E.N. HATHAWAY

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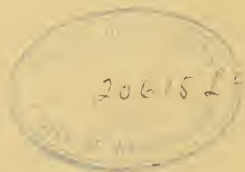




IN THE FIELDS

BY

MARY E. N. HATHEWAY



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TO

M. M. H.

Who, while the dreams of vanished days shall hover
In light and shade above the page she reads,
May here and there some simple flower discover,
Unseen by others 'mid the grass and weeds.

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IN THE FIELDS.

IN the fields, that far and wide
Reach from dawn to sunset line,
Through all chance and change abide
Treasure and estate of mine.

Blessed are my vales and hills
Overspread by happy flocks,
Watered by unnumbered rills
Flashing 'mid the trees and rocks.

Whence my title, wouldst thou know?
Not for monies duly told,
Not by deeds of valid show
I my acres count and hold;—

But by law these forms above—
Old as time, yet ne'er outgrown, —
“What we recognize and love
In very truth, becomes our own.”

So may we obtain supplies
From the knowledge earth has won,
From the ordering of the skies,
From the affluence of the sun.

And by kindred senses fine
In this life of each in all,
I have heritage divine,
I am linked to great and small.

I am wiser, that the rose
Blossoms with her radiant throng,
That the untaught birdling knows
All his wondrous arts of song.

Richer, for the gold-dust poured
On the wings of butterflies,
And the cells with honey stored
That the cunning bees devise.

Not the summer only shares
Royal bounty with my fields,
Every season harvest bears
And unfailing fortune yields.

Thus, free largess I receive,
While the owners of the soil,
Labor on from dawn till eve,
Worn and bowed with care and toil

Nature unto them is dear
Only to be bought and sold;
Not for them her works are fair,
And her oracles are told.

Though with broader-reaching years
Still I add to my estates,
Naught of mine conflicts with theirs,
Neither for the other waits:

While my portion's guarded well
In creation's living soul,
They hold fast the form, the shell,
Dreaming they possess the whole.

NOON.

THOU perfect hour of radiant sky,
And blooming earth, and sparkling sea!
Where'er my shadowy fancy turns,
Thy flashing glories answer me.
Oh ! touch this dazzling world with change,
Invoke the breezes loitering nigh,
And beckon yonder fleecy cloud
To veil thy light too keen and high.

Go, hasten from the zenith down
Into the lowlands of the west,
Where folded blossoms nod and dream,
And vespers soothe the soul to rest ;

Invite the starry flocks abroad,
Where Hesperus shall lead the way,
Thy crown and sceptre lay aside,
And shut the golden gates of day.

Then, in the dew-fall soft and cool,
With pensive step I'll wander on,
And backward glance of dim regret
For that which is forever gone ;
And wearing thus that mystic charm
So sweetly sad to feel and tell
That clings to all departed things,
I'll think of thee and love thee well.

TO-MORROW.

CHILDREN, we come at eventide
Our weariness and griefs to tell,
And trust the wise maternal voice,
“To-morrow, love, will all be well.”

And farther on, when rougher ways
Stretch long before our shrinking eyes,
The heart will hush its sighs to dream
Of rest that in To-morrow lies.

Whate'er the triumphs of to-day,
The present joys wherein we share,
This promise lures us still beyond —
“To-morrow holds a gift more fair.”

All art, all Nature that we know,
Of highest beauty, noblest use,
Grows dim before the fancied shapes
That some To-morrow may produce.

The fleet magician flies uncaught
From star to star, from sun to sun,
While our untiring steps pursue
With hopes that mortal years outrun.

And when our utmost earth is reached,
Fast holding the Eternal Hand,
We go with childlike faith to find
To-morrow in the Heavenly Land.

LIVE AND LOSE.

IF life retained its gifts in time's despite,
Beyond the touch of losses and decay,
Till climbing upward in the long-drawn light
They reached the summit of their perfect day;

If beauty kept for us its morning glow,
No petal shedding in the sun or rain,
And warbling summer stayed, untaught to know
The hush of autumn on its glad refrain;

Alas! when sovereign of the safe, bright years,
Above the stress of daily want and care,
The spirit would recall its hopes and fears,
Glad in the mortal heritage to share.

For 'tis not joy to bask in sure delight,
Nor wealth to reach completion of desire;
The victories are snatched from hours in flight,
And harvests gathered through the frost and fire.

Let the bud bloom, fade, and exhale in air;
Let youth's enchantments vanish as they choose,
With no returning, else were they less fair,
For this is best, to bravely live and lose.

AN OLD PORTRAIT

NOTHING but canvas and paint!
Of years that are vanished a part!
But an image of exquisite truth,
In the radiant fulness of youth
Embalmed by the magic of art.

What were her name and estate
No record or legend has told,
Nor whose was the skill to combine
Such marvelous color and line,
Nor if 'twere for love or for gold.

Let the past the fair mystery hold
Aloof from to-day's tell-tale breath;

I dream, standing here by its side,
She was noble in beauty and pride,
Noble in life, and in death.

Note the gracious breadth of the brow,
And the sweet gaze that turns not away,
But follows you near and afar,
Like a faithful, beneficent star,
O'erruling the night and the day.

Love dwelt in her soul as a flame,—
Oh, mark you her mouth's regal curve !
A flame mounting higher and higher,
Born and fed from celestial fire,
That ne'er from its birthright could swerve.

Her hand consummate in grace,
Were a hand to clasp for a friend ;
Most constant and tender and strong,

When days were most bitter and long,
Clasping on and on to the end.

Dead and in dust years ago !
A century's glamour and gloom
May have drifted over her head,
Till friends and kindred have sped,
And the world has forgotten her tomb :

Yet I dream by the picture that waits,
The sphinx without motion or breath,
Of *something* that still doth abide
Of the noble in beauty and pride,
The noble in life and in death.

HOPE.

WHAT though to-day have slow and dreary dawning,
All chilled and whitened by December's storm?
I feel the pulses of approaching summer
Beneath the snow-drift beating fast and warm.

And soon the honeyed blossom of the meadow
Shall be again the wandering insect's mark;
The woodland lake shall have its whispering sedges,
The eve its glow-worm, and the heaven its lark.

And I shall have thee, thee, my own heart's chosen,
The bloom and music of my earth and sky,
Content I wait the rapture of thy coming,
Nor snatch at barren pleasures fleeting by.

Oh, happy lot to me the fates have granted!

Not mine the part o'er loss and wrong to grieve;

I see new joys forever hastening towards me,

I sing through shade and sunshine, and believe.

THE LAST VOYAGE.

“O H! sail no more the treacherous seas,”
Cried Margery, gazing down the bay.
“The winds and waves may claim thy life,
Then what my breaking heart can stay?”

But cheerily her lover spoke,
Dispelling fears with tender scorn;
“I go in search of jewels rare,
My Margery’s beauty to adorn.

“One voyage more, and ’tis the last;
Then I return to seek my bride,
And lead her forth in rich array,
The fairest of the country-side.”

"Sweet fortune 'twere, indeed," she said,
 "To be the chosen queen of girls;
But hearts may only wear one crown,
 And love is more than gold and pearls."

The winds blew fresh across the main,
 And called the goodly ship to go;
And so they parted, murmuring oft,
 "'Tis the last farewell we shall know."

One on the sea, and one on shore,
 One strong to dare, and one to wait;
And one goes down in storm and wreck,
 And one in calm moves on to fate.

The tides come in, the tides go out,
 While Margery wanders to and fro,
Forever gazing towards the sea,
 The cruel sea that wrought her woe.

A whiteness gathers on her cheek,
And streaks too soon her golden curls ;
“ Ah, me ! ” she moans, in tearless pain,
“ True love is more than gold and pearls.”

And, dreaming of life's jewel lost,
She drifts unfearing to the sea —
The silent sea, that brings none back ;
“ The last voyage ! ” sighed poor Margery.

INDIAN SUMMER.

AS a fond mother when the day-time closes,
Anxious to keep her loved ones in her sight,
Goes yet again to hover round their pillows,
To give another kiss, one more "good-night;"

So the kind Summer when her hours are counted,
Clings to the life that she has made so fair;
Though spent and wasted are her royal treasures,
And shattered lie the idols of her care.

Where she so late as sovereign queen of Nature
Held her high court, and ruled her realm alone,
Now she must play the part of maid of honor,
In meek submission to a rival throne.

Often by frosts and Boreal blasts affrighted,
Adown the south reluctantly she hies;
And then comes softly back when storms are ended,
With messages of gladness from the skies.

Among the vaporous hills she loves to tarry,
Where spicy perfumes linger on the breeze
That wanders idly round the yellow farm-lands,
Catching faint echoes of the harvest glees.

The woods and groves though shorn of early splendors,
Beneath her smiles a fitful joy confess;
And all the landscape waiting in her presence
Seems leaning towards her for a last caress:

Waiting in pensive silence, memory-haunted,
Steeped in the languid sweetness of her breath,
While with regretful steps the fair enchantress
Goes down the deepening twilights to her death.

Staying to charm, till she can charm no longer;
Then, dying 'mid the scenes she lived to cheer,
Leaving the sad-voiced days a requiem chanting
Over the martyred beauty of the year.

HAPPINESS.

COULD any power command thy stay,
Or charm thy fleeting step delay,
And all our times and seasons course
In one unbroken joyous way;—

Could it be thus, the sated heart
Would never know thee as thou art;
Thy fairest phases only shine
When thou art ready to depart.

No skilled device of lock or bar
Can keep thee near, or hold thee far;
No outward rank that fortune lends
Thy inward grace can make or mar.

Our mortal sense may not disown
Thy spells celestial round us thrown,
With constant steps we follow thee,
And venture all for thy unknown.

Yet, thy pursuers fail to snare
Thy essence subtile as the air,
While they who have forgotton thee
May chance to meet thee unaware

Then, wisest he who keeps his pace,
Nor worships thy beguiling face,
For whereso'er his path may lie
Thou still canst find him in his place.

THE SPHINX.

SHE fronts the traveler as he goes,
A power to threaten and beguile;
And fear and love awake before
Her lion strength, her woman smile.

She bids him seek her mystery,
And solve her riddle strange and dim;
With art and wisdom matched against
The doom that waits to conquer him.

But vain the contest and the toil,
The weary heart, the wasted breath;
The mystic meaning still is veiled,
And all endeavor ends in death.

For, should her master-spirit rise,
And lay her secret bare and free,
She from her eminence must fall,
And cease from strife, and cease to be.

O life! whose subtle charm allures.
O life! whose will inviolate
Forever challenges the soul
To solve the mystery of fate :

And strive where it shall not attain,
And grasp at shadows that elude ;
Till, faltering, it quits the chase,
And leaves the tempter unsubdued.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

O FAIREST rose the garden knows !
This hour your brightest hues display ;
With leafy show each thorn o'ergrow,
Behold ! the Fairest comes this way.

O sunshine ! lay your gentlest ray
Upon the earth as she draws near ;
Such comfort spread beneath her tread
That she may find contentment here.

O happy thrush ! no longer hush,
But pour your melodies around,
Till soul and sense in sweet suspense
Shall deem the place enchanted ground.

O laughing stream ! with wavering gleam
Responsive to each airy thrill,
Her waiting heart untaught by art
With dreams of bliss and beauty fill.

She comes, she goes ; shut wasted rose,
No longer flaunt your splendors vain ;
Discordant bird, no more be heard !
Your song her steps can ne'er detain.

Hide, sunshine, hide your glaring pride,
Flow, sighing stream, in sadness on ;
For color flies, and music dies,
And light is shade now she is gone.

THE UNFINISHED.

WHEN in Aladdin's hall the genii wrought,
With potent spell that mortals never knew,
Till, shaped in order 'neath their magic thought
The splendid marvel grew ;

To rare completion, as a flower might blow
With radiant swiftness in the morning air,—
One casement stood amidst the glittering show
Left unadorned and bare.

And, though all cunning men their powers invoke
With priceless gems to deck the vacant place ;
No learned skill could match the spirit-stroke
Unruled by time and space.

Thus did the master-genius of our day
The palaces of fiction plan and build,
While forms made glorious from earth's common clay
The magic structures filled.

But when too suddenly the fire grew cold,
And worlds no more its luminous wonders greet,
One shadowed **"mystery"* is left untold,
A statue incomplete.

And passing vain must all attempt be found
To touch the sacred work with equal hand,
The beauteous fragment with its secret crowned
Forever thus must stand.

**"The Mystery of Edwin Drood."*

SING ON.

SING on, O nightingale !
The winds are cold and high
The stars are few and pale,
The gathering storm is nigh ;
A thorn is at thy breast
That fain would do thee wrong ;
But lull thy pain to rest,
And drown the storm with song.

Bloom bravely on, O flower !
Thy fragrant gifts repeat,
Nor shrink for drenching shower,
Nor waste for noontide heat ;

Haste with thy garlands fair
Before the frost and snow,
And strow with bounteous care
A grave that lies below.

Sing on, and bloom, O heart !
Though evil days endure,
Though fondest lovers part,
And only grief seem sure ;
Life shall retrieve the hours,
For Heaven alone is long ;
Then strow thy graves with flowers,
And still thy sighs with song.

LIKENESS.

AS Ciytie in her raptured dreaming
Forgot her nature's wonted ways,
Put on the sun-god's flowery seeming,
And never more withdrew her gaze ;

Thus, countless lives some fervid vision
With potent force may warp and sway,
Until in beauty or derision
They bear its stamp and doom for aye

O soul ! beware thy ruling passion,
Since all the fates about it throng
To bend and shape thee to its fashion,
To wing thy flight, and tune thy song.

MORNING-GLORIES.

JENNY, the mistress and maid of the dairy,
Over its window old-fashioned and bare
A vine of the morning-glory is training,
Veiling the place from the noon's vivid glare.

Swiftly it climbs and surrounds the rude lattice,
In joyous impatience its work to complete,
Circled and crowned by its lightly poised blossoms
Ever awake the first dawning to greet.

Calling the bee from his feast in the clover,
Tempting the butterfly still to delay,
While hither and thither the humming birds darting,
Snatch at their sweets and then vanish away.

The sunshine steals in through the wavering curtain,
Now softened by shadows wherever it falls,
While Jenny is busy with skimming and churning,
Or moulding the butter in bright golden balls.

Sometimes she pauses, and peeps from the casement
Catching a song, or a whistle's refrain;
She knows who is coming, her stalwart young lover,
Driving his oxen along the rough lane.

And then she may linger perchance, in the doorway,
A sentence of magical meaning to speak;
Again to her blithe round of duties returning,
With sprightlier footstep, and rosier cheek.

Fair is her window with vines over-shaded,
With beauty and sweetness enclosing her room;
Fair is her life, with love's morning-glory
Wreathing her heart with its fragrance and bloom.

RESIGNATION.

SUMMER sighs with soft complaining,
“Ah, my golden days are waning!
Yielding to the fates’ bereaving
I must lay my sceptre down :
Swallow-flocks their ranks are filling,
Locusts in the fields are shrilling,
Moths their silken shrouds are weaving,
And the grass is turning brown.

I have drained my perfect measure
Of desire, fruition, pleasure ;
From the sun all-glorious springing,
With the gifts of heavenly birth, —

I have poured from founts o'erflowing
Streams of life in full bestowing,
Floods of joy and beauty bringing
To the barren hills of earth.

Now in still, reposeful valleys
I but wait where noontide dallies,
While round me deeper hover
Forebodings sad yet sweet ;
Soon my latest bloom shall wither,
Soon the frosts my dewes will gather,
And the snows my footprints cover
'Neath their pallid winding-sheet."

PANDORA.

ONCE there lived a beauteous maid
Named Pandora, we are told ;—

(This was many years ago,
In the happy age of gold.)

She had eyes of radiant light
Ever seeking realms afar,
Gazing on from day to day,
Gazing on from star to star.

And a box to her was brought
Filled with gifts of value rare ;
But the lid she must not raise, —
Thus the oracles declare.

Long she kept her precious charge
Clasped in faithful, fervent hands,
Searching with her radiant eyes
All the breadth of seas and lands.

Then, at length, she pined to know
What within the box was hid ;—
So, the oracles forgot,
Eagerly she raised the lid.

But before her curious glance
Could discern the wondrous things,
Out abroad they quickly flew,
Hastening off on dazzling wings.

Then, Pandora all aghast
At the mischief she had done,
Closed the cover, but, alas!
Every gift had flown save one.

And the spirits shining-winged
Came not back from sea or shore,
Though she watched and waited there,
Waited for them evermore ;

Clasping close the fatal box,
Searching still with radiant eyes
All the hill-tops of the earth, "
All the hollows of the skies.

THE FIRST FLOWER.

UNDER the frozen sod and the snow-drift lying,
Sleeping unheedful of frosts and tempestuous skies,
Keeping its secret of being unchanged and undying,
It waited its season to wake from the dust and arise.

Unto its law submissive in willing devotion ;
Forces unnumbered and mystical, pitiless, sweet,
Wrought through the hours of darkness, decay and
commotion,
With unwearied patience making its purpose complete.

March with her free, wild step heralding winter's
outgoing,
Startled the sentient germ from its lingering trance ;

The south-wind's bugle anon, cheerily, hopefully blowing,
Sounded o'er hill-top and valley the note of advance.

Nearer the sunbeams drew, warming its chill earthy
cover,
Forth to the daylight beguiling it gently along;
Over it flitted the blue-bird, April's rapturous lover,
Seeking his last year's home with grateful tribute of
song.

Thou child of the fields, thou hast needed no sheltering
garden,
No artful endeavor to foster thy budding and bloom;
Nature in primitive joy was thy nurse and thy warden,
Appointing thy measure of beauty, thy mission and
doom.

O firstling of blossoms! thou sayest to heart and to
reason
"Keep true thy ideals through all the world-changes
and strife,

With far-reaching patience beholding a consummate
season

That bears in its courses the perfect fruition of life."

Oh! but to yield me more flexible to infinite forces

Calling with varied voices from morning till even,

"Up! up! and away from the lowlands and earthly
resources

Into the sunshine and song and the breezes of Heaven."

MY DREAM.

CLOSE are the walls that shut me in
Amid the restless city's din,
Where stern necessity demands
Unceasing toil with brain and hands.

For higher walls that intervene
No glimpse of sun or sky is seen;
Alike the passing seasons show
Through summer's bloom, and winter's snow.

But, as the sea-shell evermore
Divided from its native shore,
Shall in its secret chambers keep
The echo of the far-off deep;

Thus I, from scenes I love apart,
Still bear their image in my heart;
And visions come to solace me
Of joyful worlds I may not see.

I stroll at leisure in my dreams
Beside fair, memory-haunted streams,
Or lie at rest in easeful mood
In sunlit glen or vernal wood;—

Where the fresh springing grasses set
With daisy, fern and violet,
In wind-tossed waves about my bed
Their soft, ambrosial odors shed.

I hear beyond the noisy street
The heifer's low, the lambkin's bleat,
The rustle of the ripening grain,
The tinkling waterfall's refrain.

Where Nature pours her choicest wine,
And lavishes her gifts divine,
My Fancy roams an honored guest,
With golden wealth and freedom blessed.

So I with patient hope may bear
This weight of toil, restraint and care,
Till they but only seem to be --
My dream is my reality.

PARTED.

INTENT on every trace of thee I go,
Searching the silent house from floor to floor,
With footsteps lingering above, below,
Spell-drawn wherever thine have trod before.

Whatever in our blended yesterdays
Was precious in thy sight by use or wear,
Now, with a fairer meaning meets my gaze,
Now, with a dearer value claims my care.

I hoard each trifle as a jewel fine,
As if such outward remnants frail and cold
Were all that bound my being unto thine,
Were all of thee that I could know, or hold:

Were all of thee — when in the realms unseen
Of spirit-dwelling thou art monarch yet;
Leading me upward to the heights serene
Above the storms of passion and regret.

I would not call thee back by thought or sign
To chase the shadow from my darkened sphere;
I will not pause to question or repine,
Since thou art with me, though thou art not here.

I stay, content, to walk with unclasped hand,
No breath of spoken words to comfort me,
Keeping through untold years in distant land
This fond and faithful watch and ward for thee;

The while I dream, though each from each in place
May be divided far as pole from pole,
That no device of time, nor length of space
Can sever us in truth, part soul from soul.

ENDYMION.

ON Latmos' heights, one fair midsummer eve,
The beauteous shepherd boy in slumber lay,
While round about him in the shadowy glades,
Went all his flocks astray.

The gleaming stars in azure spaces blent,
The sheen and fragrance of the dew-wet flowers,
The distant fountain's fall, the breeze's sigh,
Tuned the delicious hours.

Diana strolling through her sylvan haunts,
With buskined feet that lightly pressed the ground,
Thus found him sleeping, seemingly with more
Than mortal radiance crowned.

Those who had sought her, suitors to her charms,
She held in scorn, their homage to repel;
Invaders of her sacred walks had known
Her vengeance swift and fell.

She sat enthroned in silvery state afar,
Or trod the earth majestic and serene,
Unmoved by passion's ecstasy or pain,
Of life and self the queen.

But now she paused, rapt in a new delight,
And as she softly bent his form above,
Through her cold, vestal bosom sudden thrilled
The sweet surprise of love.

And while he lay entranced beneath her gaze,
Dreaming, unconscious of impending bliss,
The goddess stooped, and breathed upon his lips
A chaste, immortal kiss.

SILENCE WITH A FRIEND.

OUT of the tumult of the crowded street,
Far from the haunts where busy Traffic dwells,
Where Travel hastens with unresting feet,
And Fashion weaves her many-colored spells;—
Let us to fields and woodland walks repair,
Where grassy banks and overarching trees
Invite to fulness of repose, and there
Together let us court Harpocrates.

His “Hush!” is sweeter to the weary sense
Than scholar’s speech, or singer’s bravest song,
Or any utterance that art invents
To brighten and beguile the hours along;—

And resting in his easeful atmosphere,
The soul shall miss awhile its burdening care,
And skyward soar, renewing hope and cheer,
With strength once more the world's wild clash
to bear.

EVERLASTING.

DO I walk in the mist of dreams?
Or is this the world that I knew,
With its fields of emerald sheen,
And skies of rapturous blue ;
Its rivulets dancing in light,
And gardens where odors prevail,
Blending with music of birds
Afloat on the tremulous gale?

I search, but nothing remains
Of those fair and wonderful hours,
Only the whiteness and strength
Of the pale everlasting flowers ;

Sighing for days that are gone,
My grateful harvest I take ;
Smiling for days that shall come,
My hopeful garlands I make.

And what is left thee, O life !
When spring with its promise has fled,
When summer's beauty and bloom
With dust and ashes are spread,
But to gather immortal flowers,
Outlasting death and decay,
And deep in thy heart of hearts
Embalm their sweetness away?

COMMON THINGS.

GIVE me the common things of life,
The good and ill of common fates,
The tranquil middle ground that lies
Between the high and low estates.

The victories of place and power
Their laurels for the brow may bind,
While in the strife the heart is left
To wander lonely, dumb and blind.

Who knows the wondrous century-flower
To find it precious? call it sweet?
But dear we hold the lowly grass
Softening the earth beneath our feet.

The eagle fronting from his cliff

The sun and storm with dauntless eye,
Owns not the gift of joy bestowed

By tiniest warbler of the sky.

The smallest orb that nightly keeps

From age to age its steadfast post,
And only serves to faintly swell

The brightness of the starry host;

With happier meaning lives and shines,

Than any meteor of a day
That flashes through the fields of heaven
With trail of splendor and dismay.

These are life's best, the cheery help

That daily crosses can beguile,
The sunshine spirit, glad and strong,
Dispelling shadows with a smile.

The truth and faith, that build a fane
Outlasting fame and princely dome,
That light and keep in sacred charge
The altar-flame of love and home.

YOUTH.

HE hastens from the mother's side,
He leaves the friendly home behind,
And restless wanders far and wide
Another world to find:—

A world that dawns upon his sight
In dim, enchanted distance set,
Gleaming with visions of delight,
And all unconquered yet.

The Past may cry with scornful power—
“But life is old, and false and stale,
Man is the plaything of an hour,
His strength of no avail;” —

He hears the Future's siren voice
Chanting a weird, melodious call,
And heart and sense a-flame rejoice,
Responsive to its thrall.

He climbs with onward purpose bent,
Above the wrecks of Yesterday,
As if through all the ages spent
No foot had trod that way.

For fruitless hope and wasted will
Must not predestinate his doom;
Though countless buds have blighted, still
For him the flower may bloom.

O blessed ardor! by whose worth
Fresh, untried spirits dare and do,
And keep this sad and toil-worn earth
Forever bright and new.

GATHERING TRAILING ARBUTUS.

IN April, when the days were bright,
And growing longer in their scope,
When buds were shaking off their sleep,
And all the airs were full of hope;

We walked together, you and I,
In mood that sometimes pensive grew;
For memories of a gladness passed
Eclipsed the present to our view.

By crooked foot-paths faintly traced,
Our way along the fields we took;
Climbed broken fence and loosened wall,
And crossed the shallow, gliding brook.

We reached the hills, beneath whose base
The river flows with ceaseless sound,
And, knowing the enchanted spot,
Knelt with our faces to the ground.

For those who come with lofty tread,
And careless, undiscerning eyes,
May often go with empty hands,
Nor find this treasure where it lies.

We brushed the withered leaves away,
Old remnants of a worn-out year,
And shouted with ecstatic glee,
“The flower is here! the flower is here!”

When crowned with spoils we homeward went,
Our thoughts assumed a gayer hue;
Beneath the magic touch of spring
Belief and courage bloomed anew.

Among all blossoms of the fields,
Say, where shall I another find,
Whose sweetness thus the senses charms,
Whose energies content the mind ?

The year's brave messenger, that tells
Of present good, and good to be ;
Whose brief companionship excites
The brave desire in you and me ;

That we might cast old habits off
To let a nobler growth appear ;
And greet all seasons with the thought,
"The flower is here ! the flower is here."

UNDINE.

SAD is her fate, whose soul to growth attains
Beneath the silent burden of love's cross;

Whose immortalities unlearned of joy,

Spring from the ground of suffering and loss

But sadder far must be the fate of her,

Who neither knows love's anguish nor delight;

Whose soul unresting keeps its aimless way,

Circling its lonely self in songless flight.

Bethesda for its living virtue waits,

Unconscious of the blessed power and sign,

Till the love-angel from the heights descends,

And troubles it with bliss and pain divine.

A BUTTERFLY IN AUTUMN.

WHY dost thou linger drooping and alone,
When from the field and grove thy mates have
 flown,

And summer's latest bloom
Fades from her shrines o'erthrown?

The foliage far and near its death-stain wears,
The starling's scarlet wing fans other airs,

The bee is housed away
With all his honeyed cares.

Alas for thee, when winter draweth nigh!
When chilling winds are speeding roughly by,
And twilight's shivering star
So soon usurps the sky.

Those were thy days, the days of burning heart,
That waked the early dawn in haste to start,
 And loitered on the hills
 Reluctant to depart.

Then, thou didst gayly flutter to and fro,
The lily fed thee from her cup of snow,
 The rose on thee would wait
 Her sweetness to bestow.

Sailing above the meadows daisy-strown,
Or, in the fervid noontide languid grown,
 Rocking on thistle-beds
 By zephyrs glad o'erblown;—

Pursuing all things beautiful and bright —
That was thy morning hour of joy and light;
 Now thou art left to know
 The meaning of the night.

And for such knowledge, by such teaching brought,
I give thy fate this one memorial thought;
For pain hath rarer tones
Than pleasure ever caught.

And while the earthly destinies go by
And fail life's latent longing to supply,
Glad welcome pays to death
Its need to satisfy.

THE SAXIFRAGE.

ON the hill-side bleak and barren,
Where the northern gales are blowing
Where the rugged soil is granting
Scanty liberty for growing :

There the saxifrage is springing,
All its blossoms grouped together,
Braving in fraternal union
Every stress of wind and weather.

Clinging to its isolation,
Nursling of the rock and shadow,
Heedless of the flowery revel
In the green and sunny meadow.

Brighter bloom and rarer fragrance
Thoughtful souls would oft surrender,
For the fairer meanings breathing
Round its presence strong and tender.

Spirit, through all Nature teaching,
In this simple guise is showing,
That where'er a life is planted;
Still there's room enough for growing.

THE LOVER'S QUESTION.

THE morning dew-drop the sunbeam greets,
In tremulous flush of surprise and glee.

Picturing worlds in its newness of light ;

Say, dearest, thus would you brighten for me?

And reveal life to me?

The vine forsakes the immovable rock,

To climb and cling to the wind-swept tree,

Lavishing endless enchantment and bloom ;

Say, dearest, thus would you cling to me?

And thus bloom for me?

The rivulet hastes on its shining track,

To blend with the stream and flow on to the sea,

Ever a fuller accordance to chime ;

Say, dearest, thus would you hasten to me ?

And accord with me ?

And if Heaven should claim you beyond recall,

Proffering state in diviner degree,

Would you turn from the angels unsatisfied ?

Say, dearest, still would you dream of me ?

And still wait for me ?

THE BROOK.

O VER the hills where the grassy uplands
Slope and reach to the greenwood's edge,
I know where a slender brook comes stealing
Down the rugged ways of a rocky ledge;

And hastens onward through verdant hollows,
And sun-browned pastures where cattle graze,
Till, under the tangle of distant thickets
It hides away from my curious gaze.

But, whether among the rough rocks groping,
In narrow channels too rudely bent,
Trampled by flocks in the thirsty noontide,
To lowliest service its being lent;

Or, smoothly gliding through silvery shallows,
Where blossoms are bending its waves to meet,
Where birds are flitting, and insects humming,
And time is moving to measures sweet;

This truth it finds, that from overcoming
Springs stronger impulse, and deepening flow,
And tuneful spirits of joy and blessing
To follow its waters wherever they go.

O wisest of streamlets! that thus is showing
Such uses and beauty from good and ill;
All changes of life into music turning,
One purpose of gladness pursuing still.

GOING EARLY.

LET me depart while all around are praying
Their warm petitions for my farther staying ;
While yet affection keeps its smile of beauty,
Nor yields its ministries to slow-paced duty.

Life were no jewel but for love's fond setting,
Death were not cruel with love's fond regretting ;
I would not linger till its lights are shaded,
And all the freshness of its colors faded.

I would go early, while the gladsome summer
Bright welcome gives to every flowery comer ;
Ere winter reigns with sad-eyed melancholy,
Crushing the roses 'neath his thorn-edged holly.

While yet all fruits are sweetest to the tasting,
And youthful hopes have known no bitter wasting,
And pleasure's sparkling cup stands overflowing,
With untired feet I hasten to my going.

Earth thou art fair, with joys forever flying,
Heaven thou art fairer, with thy joys undying,
The flickering star of morning I surrender,
To bask in noontide of eternal splendor.

ATALANTA.

MYTHIC maiden, fleet and free,
Stay not in thy beauteous flight,
While thy glances backward cast
Ever to pursuit invite.

Thou dost wear enchantment's form
To expectant heart and eye,
Hasten, lest thy charm be lost
When thy wooers gather nigh.

Keep thy courage, lover true,
Wait not in the eager chase,
Seek with fond, unwearied strength
Gift and spell to tempt her grace.

Bring from far Hesperian lands
Golden fruit to strow her way;
What though dragons guard it well?
Love hath braver arts than they.

If attainment came with ease,
Could the life from passion rest,
If its need demanded not
Mortal and immortal quest;

What were left? alas, to know
When the best is told and done,
That pursuit affords delights
Keener than its objects won.

EACH IN ITS SPHERE.

• **C**OULD I choose," dreamed the rose, "like the bird
I would warble,

And sit on the tree-top, and breezily swing;
On swift wings I'd fly from all bleak wind and weather
And follow forever the joy of the spring."

"How fair," sung the bird, "like the rose in the garden
To blossom in beauty the bright summer through,
Unconsciously stealing at noontide and twilight
The secret of sweetness from sunbeam and dew."

Cried the child, "Oh! 'twere royal to shine like the planet,
Illumining worlds with my far-glancing rays,
While tempest and conflict rolled onward beneath me,
And ages revolved with their numberless days."

While breathes a response from the deep heart of
Nature,

The mother that careth for one and for all,
"Each life is my own, that I bear in my bosom,
The stronger and weaker, the great and the small.

In lowliest duty, in highest expression,

In music and fragrance, in light and in word,
Each one in its sphere is my purpose fulfilling,
The child and the planet, the blossom and bird."

HER CHOICE.

“**N**AUGHT are houses and lands to me,
Empty are titles of highest degree.
False are all gifts of the earth below,
If unmated my heart must go.”

Thus she declared, the wilful young maid,
In the flush of her joy and beauty arrayed,
And laughed and sung in her spring-time sweet
While the pearls of fortune fell round her feet.

Till Love, her master, and sworn ally,
Sought her intent her allegiance to try,
And bravely loyal she gave her hand
To one undowered with gold or land.

Then with arms unjewelled, and hair uncurled,
Out of the sight of the envious world,
Laughing at poverty's stings she went
The path she had chosen with still content.

And through weal and woe, in Love's strength and
truth

She sung the song of her beautiful youth,
"False are all gifts of the earth below,
If unmated the heart must go."

“WE HAVE NEED OF ALL THESE THINGS.”

HOW time each trial justifies,
And final compensation brings,
In teaching our reluctant hearts
That — “We have need of all these things.”

Though sad regrets pursue our ways,
And secret grief the spirit wrings,
We weep and wait, to find at length
That — “We have need of all these things.”

Beneath our daily cares depressed
We scarce can lift our earth-bound wings;
Yet may not lay our burden off,
For — “We have need of all these things.”

Though seemingly our bitterest fruit
Most closely to the branches clings;
Some sweet the harvest must afford,
Since — "We have need of all these things."

Each draught of pain that seeks our lips,
Flows upward from eternal springs,
With strengthening power, when we can trust
That — "We have need of all these things."

And when belief o'errules the will,
The angel in us stirs, and sings,
"Come victory or defeat, 'tis well!
For we have need of all these things."

WHEN I AM GONE.

O H! to think when I am gone,
All life's movements must go on,
In their order and degree,
Making no delay for me.

Time will heal the wound I make,
Friends another friend will take,
Love that sought my answer once,
Otherwhere will seek response.

Springs will open as of old,
Leaf and blossom will unfold,
And the thrushes warble clear,
When I long have ceased to hear.

If I'm present 'neath these skies,
Clinging fast to human ties,
Or am absent and forgot,
Cruel Nature careth not.

Shall I take departure fraught
With this cold, accusing thought?
Shall I go unreconciled,
When the mother calls her child?

I have found her gifts too sweet
Now to count them incomplete;
To her law I bend my will,
Every service to fulfil.

She will take me to her heart,
Make me of herself a part,
Blend me with her growths and airs
While my being onward fares.

Somewhere in the life-domain
I shall feel and think again,
And more clearly learn and prove
Forms of beauty, truth and love.

Wherefore then should I repine
Lower senses to resign,
For a nobler range of powers?
Earthly weeds for Heavenly flowers?

Place and use last with the soul
Under Infinite control;
On this thought my weakness leans,
Trusting for the ways and means.

THE SEEKER.

“ I will not stay to gather these
Poor blossoms of the passing hour,
On yonder starry heights afar
I seek a peerless flower.”

He breathes the breath of loftier airs,
His footstep spurns the level plain,
While Nature's everyday delights
Around him tempt in vain.

The clarion-call within his breast,
With pealing echoes loud and long
Drowns the sweet murmur of the brooks,
The wild birds' morning song.

He rests not from the fervid noon
In cooling screen of tree or rock ; —
The nectared fruits beside the way
His hunger only mock.

The tempests beat upon his head,
His path o'er gulf and torrent lies,
The blossoms fade, the verdure fails,
Chilled by the glacial skies.

The day declines along the slopes
With warning shade against his cheek ; —
The race is won, he stands alone
Upon an ice-clad peak.

Alone beneath the alien stars
Enthroned in crystal state apart ;
Alas ! what life is here to fill
The voidness of a heart ?

Now, softly o'er his senses steal
The memories of his native grove,
Where Beauty slept, and only lacked
The wakening touch of love.

O blissful world so far away,
All rainbow-spanned in sun and shower!
O fields elysian! where unsought
There grew the peerless flower.

And dreaming still, with backward gaze
Fixed on the long-lost vales below,
The worn-out seeker sinks to sleep
Upon the eternal snow.

DOUBT.

THE wind blows gayly from the South
To kiss the rose's fresh young mouth,
And nestle in her glowing heart ;
But when the first bright tints are gone
He strips the petals one by one,
Disdainful, eager to depart.

Art thou thus, Love? dost thou but care
For dimpled cheek and golden hair,
The darlings of the morning hours?
And when the days are sad with change,
And colors pale, wilt thou grow strange,
Forgetful of life's faded flowers?

I give my soul to doubts, and fears
Of wasted faith and lonely years ;—
And then, and then, beneath thy smile,
In sweet content that questions not
I turn and take thy proffered lot,
If only for a little while.

AUTUMN SONG.

A SPIRIT hovers in the air,
Foreshadowing changes everywhere ;
Whispers of coming loss and blight,
And sings in varied minor keys
Of beauty passing 'out of sight.

The rose so lately fine and red,
Her petals to the winds has shed,
And rustles by the thicket's side
In withered foliage forlorn,
Too scant her faded boughs to hide.

The brook that laughed, and ran away
So fast and far, from day to day,
In haste the little lake to fill
That waits a constant fresh supply
Shut in the hollows green and still;

Now loiters, choked and tangled so
It scarce can see which path to go,
And over every hindering stone
Repeats its plaintive roundelay
Of happier hours, and pleasures flown.

The velvet-coated bee that flew
From bloom to bloom, and deftly drew
From each its tiny drop of sweet
To furnish full his distant hive.
Now rests unseen, his work complete.

A painter 'neath the trees has strolled,
And brushed their leaves with red and gold,
And loosened them in glowing maze
To flutter down the wilful gale
And carpet thick the woodland ways.

With dreamful sense the morning wakes,
And veiled in haze the sky-road takes,
While through the night-time long and lone
The sleepless cricket keeps the watch,
With shrill, unceasing monotone.

Ah! for the spirit in the air
Foreshadowing changes everywhere;
Whispering of coming loss and blight,
Singing in varied minor keys
Of beauty passing out of sight.

BESIDE A GRAVE.

IS this cold chamber of common earth
All that we gain from the earthly years?
Is this the end of all beauty and worth?
Of all that life sought amid raptures and tears?

Ah! never a grave that the mortal can make
With art's highest grandeur encompassed around,
Which the winds of time shall crumble and shake,
Such values can hold in its piteous bound.

There must be a land for the souls of men,
Old as their need, yet immortally new,
Where the flower of their being shall blossom again,
Fed with eternal sunshine and dew.

Where bosomed in peace shall anguish find rest,
Where thought in the light shall forever ascend,
Where aspiration may gather its best,
And love meet lover, and friend meet friend.

Yet, bounteous Nature, be true to thine own;
With gladness of green spread thy children's low bed;
Let roses and lilies be over them strown,
And sweet airy anthems above them be said.

Take the dust, but no more of the creature is thine;
With vision uplifted I follow afar
My treasure and hope to a country divine,
Beyond the blue ether, beyond the last star.

THE MOTHER'S CHILD.

JUST six months old, and so unlearned,
So innocent in worldly ways,
That any lamb or kitten more
Sagacity displays.

But who complains because the bud
Is not the perfect flower, full-grown?
I find my joy in this delay
That keeps him all my own.

If he could talk, some angry word
Might fret and grieve me every day;
Now, his sweet silence when I speak
Consents to all I say.

If he could walk, some wild desire
Might lead his footsteps far from me;
Now, what are heights and powers to him?
His throne is on my knee.

Alas! how soon my king will haste
To abdicate the crown he wears,
And pluck the fruits of bitter taste
The tree of knowledge bears.

Howe'er my prescient gaze surveys
The Future's dim, mysterious land,
I see him borne away from me
By time's resistless hand.

Pursuing his unresting course
I see him merged in school-boy life,
With forehead bruised, and jacket torn,
The marks of pain and strife.

And younger, brighter eyes than mine
Will steal his manly heart away,
And care and age will seek him out,
And make him sad and gray.

How gladly from such views I turn,
On nearer ones to fix my glance,
Rejoicing in his present state
Of happy ignorance.

So, Baby! come and fill my arms,
And charm me with your mute replies ;
Be wholly mine to-day, for soon
You'll be too old and wise.

RECOGNITION.

WHEN I have left thee for long, weary days,
That lengthened into wearier months and years,
Have I not found thee in thy wonted ways,
With all thy tones and gestures, smiles and tears?

Even so our instincts in their human bound
Can keep love's image fadeless and complete,
Through every chance and change of earthly round,
And conquer time with recognition sweet.

And if I first, with voice and vision flown,
Should slip beyond your reach through death's white gate,
To track companionless the vast unknown,
Leaving thee here to follow soon or late;

Then, led and taught by sequence infinite

In Heavenly knowledge, such as angels share,

When thou shouldst come, I will not doubt the light

O my beloved! to meet and know thee there.

APPLES.

EVERYWHERE in northern lands
Where an equal law commands,
Tempering the suns and snows;
True and constant in its mood,
Planned in Nature's rectitude,
There and thus, the apple grows.

When the genial skies of May
Warmer beam from day to day,
Then awakes the parent-tree;
Crowns itself with bud and bloom,
Rich with color and perfume,
Haunted oft by bird and bee.

Soon the winds with blast of fate
Rend away the robe of state,
Crush the glorious diadem ;
But this beauty used and passed
Leaves the germs of fruitage fast
Clinging to the faithful stem.

Summer with benignant power
Grants propitious sun and shower,
Gives each heart its essence due,
Paints each slowly rounding cheek
Fair with many a stain and streak,
Thus perfecting form and hue.

Vagrant cattle as they pass
Search amid the tangled grass
For the apples ripe and red ;
School-boys with discerning eye
Seek the rosiest, hanging high
In the branchès overhead.

Busy hands with grateful care
From the fields and orchards bear
Autumn's plenteous, golden store ;
Stripped by winds in reckless glee,
Soon the patient parent-tree
Stands all bare and brown once more.

But when wintry stars gleam bright,
And the house fires are a-light,
Then its fruits again appear ;
As a benediction shed
By the spring and summer fled,
Bringing back their hope and cheer.

TELL ME.

TELL me how the blue-bird sings,
Balanced high on yonder tree,
Flinging to the hungry winds
All his grief or ecstasy?

Tell me how the cherries grow,
Nodding by the window-pane,
Gathering from day and night
Nectared juice and crimson stain?

Tell me how the tints are caught
In the bosom of the shell?
Tell me what the perfume means
Breathing from the lily-bell?

Tell me how the sunbeam shines?

How the crystal form is wrought?

How electric currents move?

Tell how thought responds to thought?

Who shall tell me what I ask?

Who the heights and depths may scan

So to lift the veil that hides

Nature's primal touch from man?

Language vainly seeks to reach

This celestial range of arts;

"Tell me!" is the ceaseless cry

Rising from unanswered hearts.

THE PRESENT HEAVEN.

O UR seasons pass with half their harvests wasted,
O'ergrown with doubts and fears;
With their most sacred hopes unreached, untasted,
Delayed beyond the years.

Not thus should our ideals wait fruition
Till sphered with seraphim;
Since, men or angels, in whate'er condition,
We may abide with Him.

We dwell on high, when victors in believing
Our wills to His resign,
When we still trust through giving and bereaving,
A Law, a Love Divine.

Along the dusty paths of earth up-stealing,
Are Heavenly blossoms found
By all the searchers of His ways, revealing
This too as holy ground.

Oh! not alone in worlds of future knowing
The Infinite is won;
The present moment fitly spent is showing
Eternal joys begun.

A WINTER VIEW.

A cold gray sky hangs overhead,
The woods and fields a shadow wear,
No moods of passion or delight
Stir the still pulses of the air.

Gone is the fair disguise that held
The mystery of form concealed,
And every sculptured line and curve
In true proportion lies revealed.

So while external splendors fade,
To-day another glory knows,
The glory of consummate strength
In pure completeness of repose.

No blithesome tales are uttered now
To blithesome listeners far and near,
But gracious memories softly rise
And fill with peace the patient year.

In each expressive shape I trace
Its leaning on a latent power,
Its waiting with untiring hope
The dawning of a triumph hour.

The stately trees accepting fate,
And standing in their pride alone,
The ice-locked brook, the lowly brier
Clasping its arms about a stone ;

Whisper of Nature's boundless love,
That underlying all her art
Now pours her raptures on the winds,
Now hoards them in her mighty heart.

For rest and motion, light and dark,
In equal joy to her belong,
And all the uses of the hours
Accord in her eternal song.

Then what are cold and clouded skies?
The limits of this landscape drear?
To-day contains all summers past,
The drama of the world is here.

RENEWAL.

O FAIR, new world ! whose germs unfold
From the dim chaos of the old !

I watch with questioning heart and eyes
While Nature paints afresh the skies,
And all her May-time fancies weaves
O'er last year's withered grass and leaves.

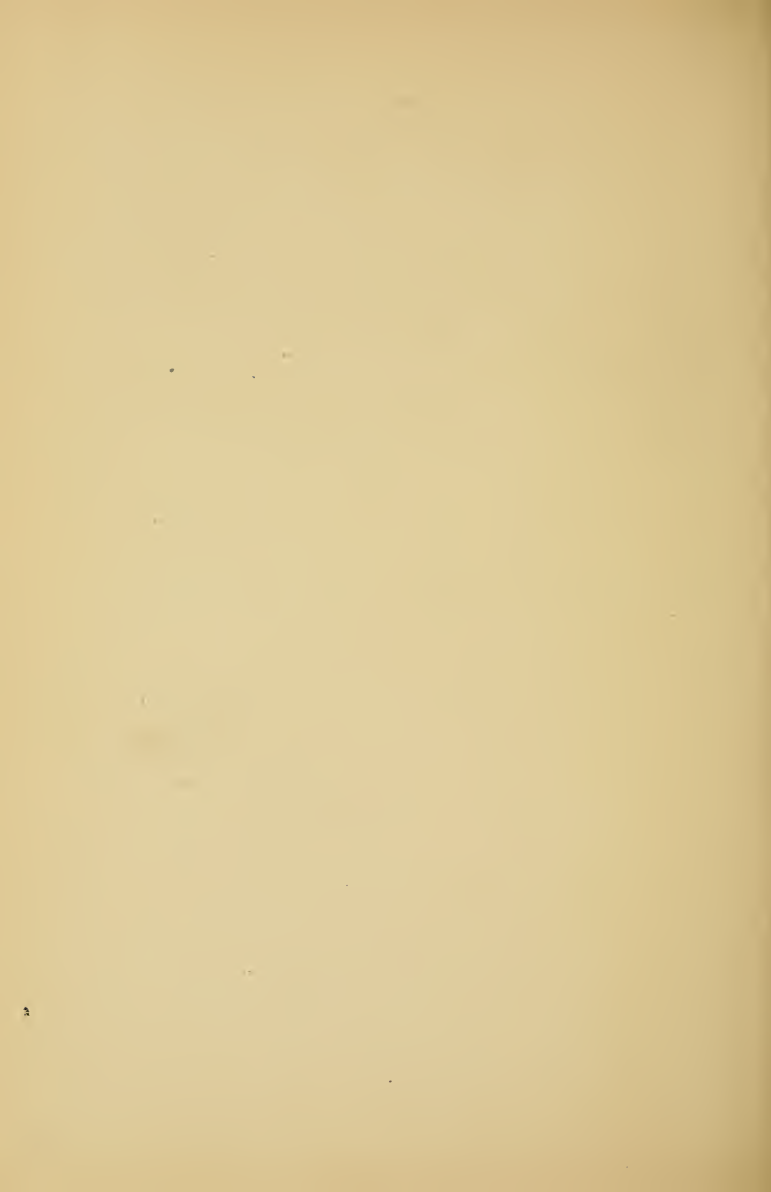
Waked from their wintry dream of death,
Her blossoms blow with odorous breath,
Her birds forget their exile long
In this return to love and song,
Her sunshine poured upon the hills
With conscious bliss all being fills.

O earth! could I win back like you
Spring, with its carol, flower and dew,
And 'neath their beauty hide away
The dust and darkness of decay,
The sense and shadow of regret,
And in the new the old forget!

But I with no recall, to time
Must yield my spring, my summer's prime,
The heart's rose blooms but once, ah, me!
The ripened fruit drops from the tree,
The frost and snow above them fall,
And hold them fast in endless thrall.

Yet, Nature though she make me weep
By taking what I fain would keep,
Still, whispers sweetly through her scorn,
"Rest in thy part, my noblest born,
Thine the diviner gift, that brings
Renewal in eternal springs."

VERSES FOR CHILDREN.





DRIVING HOME THE COWS.

LOW in the sky the last sunbeams are shining,
Sprinkling their gold through the apple-tree boughs ;
Tie up your shoes, and put on your hat, Bobby,
And we'll go together, and drive home the cows.

This is the way, through the lane, by the orchard,
Across the stone-bridge, where the brook waters flow ;
Then we'll let down the bars, and leave the road open.
And over the hills to the pastures below.

Here is the path where they go in the morning,
Cropping the clover and fresh dewy grass;
Brushing the sweet-fern and bayberry bushes
That shed their faint perfume on all things that pass.

Yonder they're waiting, at rest in the hollow,
Under the walnut-trees shady and tall;
You call them, Bobby, while I pick the lilies,
And white meadow-rue, clustered here by the wall.

Dolly starts quickly, her keen mother-instinct
Urging her home her young bossy to meet;
While Brindle and Buttercup, Daisy and Jewel,
Come after her, pacing with tardier feet.

And thus, by the pathways of morning returning,
They wind round the hill-side an orderly band,
Past orchard and brook, till they reach their night-haven,
Where Bridget awaits them with milk-pail in hand.

Look ! here on the fence is the nest of a robin,
And see where she comes from her foraging flight !
We'll watch while she's feeding her three hungry birdlings,
And tucking them under her wings for the night.

Now homeward we'll haste, as the twilight grows deeper,
And evening's fair star glimmers soft in the west ;
For soon little boys like the cows and the robins,
With work and play ended must go to their rest.

“WHAT I WOULD DO.”

IF I were a bird, I would warble a song
The sweetest and finest that ever was heard,
And build me a nest on the swinging elm-tree;
Oh, that's what I'd do if I were a bird.

If I were a flower, I'd hasten to bloom,
And make myself beautiful all the day through
With drinking the sunshine, the wind, and the rain;
Oh, if I were a flower that's what I would do.

If I were a brook, I would sparkle and dance
Among the green fields where sheep and lambs stray,
And call, “Little lambkins, come hither, and drink!”
Oh, if I were a brook that is what I would say.

If I were a star, I would shine wide and bright

To guide the lone sailors on oceans afar,
And travelers lost in the deserts and woods ;

Oh, that's what I'd do if I were a star.

But I know that for me other tasks have been set,

For I am a child, and can nothing else be ;

I must sit at my lessons, and day after day

Learn to read and to spell, and add one, two and three.

Yet perhaps, by my books I shall sometime find out

How the birds sing so sweet, how the roses grow red,
What the merry brook says to the moss-covered stones,
And what makes the stars stay so high overhead.

SECOND CHILDHOOD.

P^{OO}R old Grandma, full of ills
That her ninety years have wrought,
Dull of hearing, dim of sight,
Slow and wandering in her thought;

Sits with patient, folded hands
In her ancient chair all day,
With her earthly labors done,
Waiting to be called away.

While her youngest grandchild Rose,
Bright-eyed maiden, good as fair,
Is the sunshine of her life,
Hovering round with loving care.

Sweet companionship they hold,
Talking of the old, old time;
For the grandame's heart abides
With the treasures of her prime.

Gorgeous flowers may bloom To-day,
But a charm they lack, in truth;
Those delight her most that grew
In the gardens of her Youth.

So the little daughter brings
Spicy mints, and balm and sage,
In neglected corners found,
Favorites of a by-gone age.

Oft the grandame pleased and sad,
Strokes her head with tender hand,
Saying, "'Tis my time to go
To the far-off, better land.

"I shall leave my darling here,
And when she is old and gray
Some dear child may be to her
Precious comforter and stay."

But the angels pass her by,
Leave her weary, worn and old,
Gathering Rose, another lamb
For the Heavenly Shepherd's fold.

One sweet thought poor Grandma's mind
From its sorrow can divide ; —
"I shall not be lonely now
When I reach the other side.

"Many faces I've forgot,
For they went so long ago ;
But this darling, last and best,
I am sure that I shall know."

So she sits with patient smiles
In her ancient chair all day,
Every earthly tie dissolved,
Waiting to be called away.

PAT'S DOLL.

POOR little Pat is so sickly and lame
He never has walked as other boys do;
But he lies in his bed, or sits in his chair,
Summer and winter, the whole year through.

Nothing he sees of the great wide world
From his chamber window so narrow and high,
But the dusty houses, and dustier streets,
And a sunless strip of the cold northern sky.

Sometimes he watches with curious eyes
His sturdy young cousins Teddy and Mike,
Wading in puddles, and sailing chip-boats,
And he cannot guess what such pleasures are like.

Many long hours alone he must stay,

While the hard-working mother goes out here and there
Washing and scrubbing, the money to earn
That furnishes scanty shelter and fare.

But a strange thing happened not long ago,

A messenger came, and left at the door
A doll, of wonderful beauty and size,

And, "A present for Pat," was the mark that it bore.

O what delight! for a desolate heart

To claim for its own a creature so fair,
With her mouth forever so smiling and sweet,
With her round rosy cheeks, and soft flaxen hair!

Pride and happiness lift him as high

As ever the heir of a throne could be,
When he holds her up to the dingy pane,
For the urchins Teddy and Mike to see.

Now he believes what the old stories tell,
How the small fairies appear now and then,
Bringing large gifts in mysterious ways
To cheer and comfort the children of men.

Oh! how she blesses and brightens the days,
Softening the hardships of hunger and cold;
How the good spirits above and below
He thanks for this treasure to have and to hold.

BIRDS IN AUTUMN.

DEAR little birds, 'tis your time to go
Ere the winter comes with its drifting snow ;
The beautiful work of summer is done,
And you must follow the track of the sun.

The leaves fall fast through the hazy air,
And the tree-tops rustle deserted and bare,
While the nests you builded in joyful May
The winds have carelessly scattered away.

Bee and butterfly seek no more
'Mid honeyed blossoms their food and store,
For the flower-stalks lie on the cold, brown earth,
Crushed by the frosts in their pitiless mirth.

There are southern lands where gardens still grow,
While soft warm breezes about them blow;
Where fruits hang ripe in the sun's full rays,
And shed their sweets through the long, bright days.

The cricket chirps loudly, "Haste, do not delay!"
And the groves of the South call, "Come, come away!"
You shall reach fairer shores on unerring wing,
Then go little birds, and return with the spring.

THE DEAD HORSE.

DEAD! Our Fanny, the gentle horse
That kept so long on her faithful way,
And carried her master over the roads,
Through storms and sunshine, from day to day.

All the village places were known to her,
Often she visited market and mill,
Going wherever her duty might call,
With a steady pace and contented will.

One brook she loved, whose waters come down
From higher meadows, with shadow and gleam,
Down past the willow, the iris and rose,
Hurrying on to a larger stream.

Here she would pause, and mutely entreat
Permission to taste the exhilarant tide;
Lingering fondly amid the waves
That prattled and tempted on every side.

Many a traveler trudging on foot
Hailed her approach as a vision of cheer;
And never was loitering boy afraid
A ride to solicit when she drew near.

Still flows the brook from its hidden springs,
Past willow and iris, with shadow and gleam;
But the horse that loved it is seen no more,
Her life is merged in the larger stream.

Out in the orchard her grave is made,
Where in the spring-time the white blossoms blow,
Where in the summer the oriole sings,
Where in the autumn the apples hang low.

Though others as worthy may come and go,
With friends their virtues and graces to tell,
None in our hearts can ever displace
This gentle old Fanny, we knew so well.

RED-RIDING-HOOD.

WHEN will the quaint old story lose its charm?
The story of the little artless maid,
Who all too innocent to dream of harm
Met danger unafraid.

Fair as we fancy angels, and as good,
Who has not seen her in youth's fairy-land
Wrapped in her scarlet cloak and dainty hood,
With basket in her hand?

Who has not followed her as thus she trips
Along her way with quick, unconscious feet,
With merry songs upon her rosy lips,
Or laughter gay and sweet?

Intent on ministries of love and cheer,

Her eager thoughts fly bird-like on before
To where the lonely grandame waits to hear
Her light touch at the door.

Against her cunning foe she asks no shield,

His snares excite nor terror nor surprise;
Alike are shadowy wood and open field
Beheld with guileless eyes.

As on she goes unmindful of the gloom,

Such Heavenly graces all her ways endue
That flowers might choose beneath her steps to bloom,
Of beauty strange and new.

Immortal type of innocence and truth!

Long as affections gather round the good,
The dwellers in the fairy-land of Youth
Shall love Red-Riding-Hood.

GIVE AND TAKE.

BRINDLE loiters home at eve,
Answering her milking-call,
Snatching mouthfuls as she goes
Of the grasses fresh and tall;—

Pauses gravely now and then,
Breathing comfort in the air;
Rubs against a splintered rail,
Leaving there a wisp of hair.

Thus, at length she seeks her shed,
Heedless of all consequence,
Never knowing that she gave
Such a treasure to the fence.

But a bird that lingered near
Sees the gift with quick delight ;
Gathers it, and bears it off
To her chosen building-site.

There, with finest hay 'tis wrought
To the shape that suits her best ;
And the searching sunshine finds
In the fields no fairer nest.

Later, her maternal care
Daily work and pleasure brings ;
And at eventide she sits
With her young ones 'neath her wings ;

Watching with a grateful glance
From her habitation small.
Brindle loitering down the lane.
Answering her milking-call.

CRADLE SONG.

NOW with loving mother-touch
Make the Baby's cradle-bed,
On its pillow soft and white
Gently lay his drooping head ;
Up and down, up and down,
Let the rockers smoothly go ;
Down and up, down and up,
Soothing him to slumber so.

Now the hands their playthings drop,
Losing all their little skill,
And the weary eyelids close,
And the rose-bud mouth is still ;

Up and down, up and down,
Let the rockers smoothly go ;
Down and up, down and up,
Soothing him to slumber so.

Music from the mother-voice
Breathes above him sweet and clear,
Telling of the Heavenly Love,
And of guardian angels near;
Up and down, up and down,
While the rockers smoothly go ;
Down and up, down and up,
Soothing him to slumber so.

Sunshine glare is screened away,
Hushed is every sound of dread,
Velvet-footed moves the world
Round the cherished sleeper's bed ;

Up and down, up and down,
While the rockers smoothly go;
Down and up, down and up,
Soothing him to slumber so.

WISHING AND WORKING.

“COME, beautiful lily, come sweetest of blossoms,”
Repeats the young wisher, outstretching his hand,
“I long to possess you, but dread the dark water,
Oh! come to me where on the margin I stand:

“For I am no swimmer, and own little knowledge
In fitting a vessel or using an oar,
My holiday raiment suits not rough adventure,
Then, come to me here on the smooth, tranquil shore.”

“Ah no!” says the lily. “stand there on the margin
Through daylight and darkness, I come not to you;
I keep in all seasons my distance and dangers,
And wait for a conqueror valiant and true.

“I watch for his coming, I know his behavior,
He swims like the wild-duck, and bounds like the deer;
He shrinks not for peril nor spoiling of raiment,
And works with unwavering purpose and cheer.

“And when I behold him draw nearer, and nearer,
I’ll fail not to greet him with welcoming sweet;
For beauty’s the guerdon of daring and labor,
And gladly I’ll lay all my worth at his feet.”

GRANDMOTHER'S CAP.

WHAT has become of Grandmother's cap
She spread with care on the grass one night,
Close by the blossoming lilac-bush,
To bleach in the dews and moonbeams white?

Has human malice, or elfin guile
Plundered the gossamer web in play?
Or reckless winds from the east or west
Wafted it far from her sight away?

No answer comes to her faithful search
From the earth-fields green, or the sky-fields blue;
And what has become of her finest cap
Is Grandmother's wonder the summer through.

The Robins could tell, Dame Redbreast knows,
For at early dawn one morning in May
Seeking her building-stores she came
Where the bleaching lace 'mid the dew-drops lay.

She seized it, and flew with her helpful mate
To the half-made nest on the apple-tree,
Where they deftly wove it with twigs and straws,
Chatting and singing in frolicsome glee.

But when the lilac, lily and rose
Had bloomed and faded in retinue sweet,
When summer birdlings were fledged and flown,
And autumn winds round the hill-tops beat ;

From the leafless bough of a gnarled old tree
A nest was hanging in ruins forlorn,
While a fluttering fragment of lace revealed
Grandmother's head-dress spoiled and torn.

With a frown she viewed the precious remains
Of use and beauty alike bereft;
But smiled soon at thought of the by-gone spring,
The Redbreast pair and their mischievous theft.

LITTLE SISTER.

LITTLE Sister. Roped in white,
There with folded hands she lies,
Breathless silence on her lips,
Endless slumber on her eyes.

Leaving earth with no regrets
Clinging to her Heavenward feet,
All that she has known of life
Was to grow more fair and sweet.

Yesterday she was our own ;
Ours to comfort, love and teach ;
Now she seems a wondrous star,
Shining far beyond our reach.

Lay the scattered toys aside,
Fold the little clothes away,
Smooth the empty cradle-bed
No more needed day by day ;—

Angels shall attend her now
With immortal food and rest,
Leading her with tenderest care
Through the gardens of the blessed.

THE ORGAN PLAYER

SEE, where he comes, the king of drudges
With steady step, and dauntless mien,
While at his side a princess trudges
With castanets and tambourine.

No threatened ills his realm besetting
The sunny sky with shadows mock ;
Her royal mood holds no regretting
For shoeless feet and tattered frock.

No claims have they to name or station,
To house or lands, to state or town ;
Unfixed by home or occupation
They roam the country up and down.

No dreams have they of high ambition,
No cares of plenty or of pride,
For thus endowed is their condition
With ease to larger fates denied,

They gayly laugh and talk together
In their own sweet Italian tongue,
As if earth knew no clouded weather,
And life was ever glad and young.

And oft at door and window staying
They ring their changes o'er and o'er,
While eager children list their playing
With pence in hand to plead for more.

And thus they glean in their progression
Amid the wide world's harvest hours ;—
A part of Summer's fair procession,
To vanish with her birds and flowers.

BROTHER'S BEDTIME.

O VER the hill-tops has vanished the sun,
Daytime is ended, the nighttime begun;
The moon with her countenance half turned away,
Gives to the evening the best light she may.

All weary creatures now haste to their home;
Up from the pastures the cattle have come;
The downy young chickens have gone to their rest,
Under the hen-mother's wings softly pressed.

Slowly the flowers their gay petals close,
Gratefully yielding to dewy repose; —
The bee in the hollyhock lingering late,
Is caught in her chamber till morning to wait.

Up in the tree-branches leafy and dim
Robins are chanting their sweet vesper hymn;
Brightly the stars twinkle out in the blue, —
“Come, little Brother, 'tis bedtime for you.”

Two tired hands let their playthings all go,
Two tired feet up the stairway climb slow,
Two tired eyes droop in slumber's eclipse,
“Good night,” drops faintly from two tired lips.

Soft be the pillow beneath his fair head,
Light be the covering over him spread,
Safety and Quiet, keep guard round the place!
Fold him kind Sleep, in a gentle embrace!

Wandering dreams. hover gladly above!
Lead him through pathways of pleasure and love,
Till darkness and silence in turn slip away,
And morning recalls him to action and play.

POP-CORN.

BURIED in darkness under the ground
Slowly its way to the light it found,
And feeding on sunshine, rain and dew,
Through all the long bright summer it grew
Upward, alike amid calms and storms
Living its life in visible forms,
Shaping each leaf, and stalk and ear,
Unconscious of harvest drawing near.

And when its seasons were duly told,
And the bountiful year was growing old,—
Withered by heat, and chilled by frost,
With all its freshness and beauty lost,
'Twas borne from the desolate field away,

Husked and hidden from outer day,
Safely to rest in its dim retreat,
Till again it comes forth for the children to eat.

This indeed is its final stage,
As shelled and shut in an iron cage
'Tis tossed and shaken in fiery heat,
With every torture growing more sweet,
Till all its heart expands to the light —
Softened to tenderness, blossomed in white.

We like the corn must strive and toil
To lift ourselves from the darkness and soil;
And, ah! my children, you may be sure
Some trials are good for us to endure,
And for all that we cheerfully undergo
Whiter and sweeter the heart will grow.

THE SNOW-BIRD.

HE is the Winter's child,
And comes when winds are wild,
When the sun hides his face, and skies are sad;
Then, hurrying to and fro,
Tracking the smooth new snow,
He frolics in the storm, and finds life glad.

He seeks in garden-walks
The withered flower-stalks,
Whose secret treasures have the frost withstood;
And on the hoarded seeds
In happy haste he feeds,
Calls to his merry mates, and finds life good.

Open the window high,
And scatter a supply
Of generous crumbs, and bid him welcome here;
For pleasant is the sight,
When earth is cold and white,
To see this bonny wanderer hovering near.

COUNTING THE COST.

SEE this little girl walking the street,
Watch her twinkling, dainty-shod feet,
How her eyes gleam unshadowed by care,
How her face glows in the frosty air !

Look at her, lifting her gay silken skirt
Out of the reach of the dampness and dirt,
With the fairest hand that ever was hid
In the delicate depths of a tiny kid.

Her hat is made of the richest stuff,
And she carries in triumph the smallest muff,
Which she often fondles against her cheek,
As if she would win it to feel and speak.

Walking the street on its sunniest side,
She does not dream in her holiday pride
What kingdoms their tribute to her must pay,
She counts not the cost of her brilliant array.

How the world is striving she does not know
That art and beauty may live and grow,
And the daily prices of utmost pain
That life is giving its wealth to gain.

Ah, careless maiden! just think of that!
When you tie the strings of your jaunty hat
With its ostrich feathers drooping down
All round the buckled and banded crown.

Think of the frightened bird that was chased
Over the sands of a torrid waste,
With the speed of a courser flying in vain,
For its precious plumage captured and slain.

While the ravished spoils by relentless hands
Were carried far off to distant lands,
To deck with their fragile loveliness
Such a thoughtless little girl's winter dress.

No pictures are rising before her eyes
Of eternal snows, and polar skies,
And stalwart huntsmen in garments rude,
Lords of the desolate solitude; —

From out this region of darkness and cold
Bringing warmth and comfort, splendor and gold,
Sables of richness beyond compare,
Ermines a princess might covet to wear.

Walking through life on its sunniest side,
She does not dream in her beauty and pride
What kingdoms their tribute to her must pay,
She counts not the cost of her brilliant array.









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